

WAR

R. R. TEETER

Senator Stewart, of Nevada, is reported to have said, "There is nothing so good for humanity as an occasional war. Man by nature is a fighting animal, and when he remains too long in a state of peace he deteriorates. Peace societies mean well, but they show a lack of knowledge of human nature as well as of history. Our war with Spain was a good thing for us, and the present war in the Philippines is to be commended. War means expansion, and a nation that does not expand is marked for decay. If we listen to the so called anti imperialists, dry rot will be our doom."

Hear! O, ye deluded (?) ministers of the Gospel! Ye who have been preaching "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will to men." Ye, who have been teaching the doctrine of the brotherhood of man! Ye, who have thundered from the sacred pulpit, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Ye, who have tried to uplift humanity and bless the human race by telling of One who said, "Peace I leave with you, peace I give unto you." Change thy tactics, O, thou foolish soldier of the cross! Grasp thy sword of steel, smite, shoot, kill! Let the blood of thy fallen brother paint this old earth a crimson hue! Let the great sun shine down upon the gory scene and streak the heavens with its lurid reflection! Ye, who have been attending the kindergarten of the one who said, "Learn of me," go to the great university of the august senator of the west, who says, "There is nothing so good for humanity as an occasional war."

What, tho Isaiah did say, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace." What did he know about the needs of modern government? What, tho Jesus Christ did found the great peace society, and tho his advent to the world was heralded by angelic voices. Does not this statesman say, "Peace societies show a lack of knowledge of human nature as well as of history?" Does he not say that man is a "fighting animal?" And who would pervert nature?

The senator's philosophy is, if man does not fight he will not develop, and unless he has an opportunity to kill some one occasionally he will deteriorate into savagery or barbarism.

Or, perhaps, since as General Sherman said, "War is hell," the worthy senator would have a foretaste of the future; would have man become familiar with the destiny of all who live only after the flesh.

O, what a cold, desolate, uncivilized world this will be to the honorable senator, when, "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." When, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." But perhaps he will have turned to dust ere that time comes.

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PRAYER

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Oh that I knew where I might find Him.—Job 23: 3.

INTRODUCTION

The convicting power of the word of God in the transformation of the heart from an unregenerate to a regenerate state or in other words from a natural to a spiritual life prompts me to write an article or perhaps articles on the above subject. I have long ago learned that God demands of his children such lives that will teach as well as the lips of the same. Christianity is more a possession than a profession. I shall never forget the statement of Mr. Gerhart in his lecture to the students and others, while I was in school in Ashland University—"The Christian ideal is not a principle to be worked out but a life to be imitated."

My reasons for choosing the subject of "prayer" above reading, or listening to preaching, as a power or means of improving our lives, is this, I do not think any part of the worship of God appeals so to the conscience of man as does prayer. When we bow in the presence of an audience and much more in the presence of an Omniscient Being and endeavor to ask for bequests, the question confronts us, and one that touches the vital cord of our heart and impels one to ask "are we worthy of this?" When I look back over my life and see the failures, the mistakes which I have made, I exclaim, "O wretched man that I am." But the past is past and we must profit by our mistakes. I rejoice that we have One who forgives all our transgressions if we but ask him, and then try to live up to better and nobler convictions. Now a few thoughts on the subject of prayer. Why should we approach God—our Father, his Son our Savior, and Redeemer, yea, our brother, and not feel his very presence while we pray? There is something wrong if we fail to realize the presence and power of Christ. Brethren, I write now as I feel. Imagine ourselves as bowed in prayer, as an assembly in worship, our whole soul thrown into our prayer, our only desire,—the extension of the borders of Christ's kingdom, to learn more and more of his divine will, is there any reason why He should not hear us and help us? Surely not. An electric wire is charged from end to end, a move of the key at one end causes a motion at the other end, an electric wire extends from one soul to the bosom of Jesus, and is charged by divine love and a single touch of the power of God at one end cannot help but cause an action at the other.

I proceed now to the first division of my article.

I

The absence of God in prayer.

I confess my inability to properly treat so great a subject and especially so since it bears so close a relation to the very essence of God, right thoughts, right motives, right words, and right deeds. If God thru Jesus had not said, "Blessed are those that do hunger and thirst after righteousness," and

added the promise "for they shall be filled," I do not know what could keep weak Christians from sinking in despair. Many times have I bowed in prayer and arose and felt more miserable than I did previous to my petition. I knew that it was not the fault of God, it could not have been the fault of my brethren and sisters, and so the fault must lay within myself. And while I thus speak I only give the experience of many of my fellow laborers in Christ's vineyard. I relied on myself more than on God. True devoted prayer is the greatest stimulant to a Christian life. Our blessed Savior diligently attended to the mission on which his Father had sent him, and during the silent hours of the night while others were sleeping he was in secret prayer with the Father that he might be filled with the Spirit to perform the duties of the next day. Next spring when the power of the sun is manifested on the earth and warms it, when the gentle showers shall fall, we will soon see the trees bud and put forth their leaves. Thus when in secret communion with God, and having been filled with his spirit why should we not put forth the glory of Christ, as did Moses when he descended from Mt. Sinai and his face shone so brightly that the children of Israel would not go near; we should be made stronger, better qualified to enter upon the duties enjoined upon us as children of God.

Am I saying too much when I say that perhaps in no single life is there an experience more common than this and one that is less satisfactory? Frequently in our prayer we seem to have no effluent emotion, we can speak of little in our life (devotional life) that is real life; of little that appears like communion of a living soul with a living God. Are there not many "closet hours" in which our feelings seem oppressed, a lack of consciousness of the presence of God? We have no words which are, as George Herbert says "heart deep." We feel no joy, no peace, no comfort of love, forsaken of all, all as a dead calm sea; and to add to this unpleasant feeling, to hear of the joy and happiness, and satisfaction of others. We read of Payson, that his mind, at times, almost lost its sense of the eternal world, in the glorious thoughts of God. His soul was overwhelmed with the glories of the eternal world; and as Paul, lifted from the earthly scenes to behold the beauty of the Christian life.

Edwards tells us of the sweet hours he enjoyed on the banks of the Hudson river, while in secret communion with God, and according to his words "knows not how to express his experience otherwise than by a calm, sweet abstraction of soul from all the concerns of the world; and sometimes a kind of vision * * * of being alone in the mountains, or some solitary wilderness, far from all mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapped and swallowed up in God."

We read of our blessed Savior that "As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became white and glistening." And, now as said before we are